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ABSTRACT

Suggestions for improving the state of the humanities in two-year colleges are presented, based on the findings of a nationwide study of humanities faculty. Among the policy recommendations are: (1) administrators/faculty leaders should organize lay committees as advisors to humanities programs and should involve humanities instructors with such committees; (2) more flexibility in workload and fiscal formulas is needed to accomodate instructors teaching short humanities segments in technical courses; (3) released time should be made available for instructors who organize extra-curricular humanities activities; (4) incentives should be offered to departments which recommend selection of faculty candidates from minority groups; (5) administrators/faculty leaders should facilitate articulation committees representing secondary schools and the two-year college; (6) resources should be made available to encourage faculty development of curricular materials; (7) special forms of in-service training should be provided for both full- and part-time faculty; (8) increments paid to faculty upon receipt of the doctorate should be eliminated and the extra funds spent on support of curricular improvement; (9) disciplinary associations should vigorously organize and recruit in two-year colleges; and (10) interdisciplinary graduate training is needed. (JDS)

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Upholding the Humanities

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Concern for the humanities in higher education is not new. For years, university-based humanists have watched ever-increasing proportions of students, funds, and support going into life, physical, and behavioral sciences and technologies. And now, programs leading students to immediate employment have arisen as the new competitors. Teachers of language, literature, and the arts cling precariously to the small part of the curriculum that is left to them.

But as difficult as is the plight of the humanities in the universities, it is doubly so in the community and junior colleges. There, where nearly half the freshmen and sophomores in America are enrolled, traditions are short and rapid response to the whims of the public is the norm. As a result, just as the "Three Rs" characterized early-century elementary schools, the "Three Cs" dominate the junior colleges in the 1970s. Career, Compensatory, and Community education draw more and more students and fiscal support.

What is happening to the humanities in the two-year colleges? They certainly seem to have few friends. Except in the small, independently controlled institutions, college spokesmen are disinclined to defend them. Most administrators think their best response to community needs is to sponsor programs that generate the highest enrollments--rather an abandonment of educational authority to the marketplace. External support is no greater. Those federal legislators who appropriate hundreds of millions for career education seem not to care about the humanities. Nor do the state legislators who welcome the opportunity to denounce "frill courses." And the students flock to occupational

programs because they are told they dare not graduate without training in a particular skill.

These groups clearly are not proponents of the humanities. For advocacy we must look to the faculty who obviously have some commitment to the field in which they spend their working life. But even the faculty are marked by diffidence. Some instructors are vigorous, creative humanists who feel they are protecting the last tiny bastion of liberal thought in a world that says that if it is not immediately and apparently useful, it can't be any good. However, many others are uncommitted teachers, disillusioned with the shrinking enrollments in their classes, discouraged by their working conditions, unconcerned with or alienated from the ideas guiding their institutions. Sequestered in their classrooms like battle-weary soldiers huddling in trenches, they have broken away from their academic disciplines. Their main concern is security of employment, not furthering humanistic studies.

Assuming there is a place for the humanities in two-year colleges, how can they be sustained? They are not likely to gain a higher priority position than the "Three Cs" in the eyes of public officials. The faculty are the most likely agents for maintaining the humanities. But disheartened as they are, they need much assistance. Can they be helped?

The National Endowment for the Humanities recently commissioned a series of studies of the humanities in two-year colleges, to assess their status, and to determine what might be done to enhance them. Under Endowment sponsorship, the Center for the Study of Community Colleges conducted a nationwide survey of the faculty teaching two-year college courses in literature, history, foreign languages, political science, philosophy, and a dozen other disciplines typically placed under the humanities rubric. A careful sample of 2384 full-time and

part-time instructors in 156 colleges was drawn and an eleven-page questionnaire distributed and retrieved from 84% of those surveyed. Information on how the instructors relate to other instructors in their field, to their students, and to their professional associations was gathered along with assessments of faculty satisfaction and desires for professional development. The comprehensive picture of the faculty was rounded out with information about whom they see as their reference groups, what they think about the humanities, how they teach, and what they need to strengthen their activities.

The information was put together in several reports and discussed with numerous two-year college educators around the country. Two assumptions were made: the humanities must be maintained as part of the educational offerings in community colleges; and the humanities can most effectively and immediately be strengthened through interventions with the faculty who teach them. Building on the survey data and the discussions, the Center for the Study of Community Colleges has made the following recommendations to college leaders, university program directors, and state and federal agency heads.

● As community- based institutions, the two-year colleges must attract support for their programs from their local communities. Accordingly, the humanities must be cultivated among a lay constituency. The faculty understand the importance of community relations--nearly all survey respondents agreed with the statement, "This college should be actively engaged in community service," but they do not see the community as an important asset in the humanities program.

In answer to an open-ended question asking what changes the instructor would like to see effected in the humanities program, 30% noted, "More and better humanities courses," while only 3% indicated "More community involvement."

The occupational programs have been quite successful in organizing interested members of the community as program advisors, student placement and recruiting agents, and program supporters. The humanities advocates should take similar action. Although the faculty generally seem disinclined to take a lead in organizing such committees, the administrators and faculty leaders should organize lay committees as advisors to the humanities programs and should involve the humanities instructors in interacting with these committees.

- The humanities faculty are aware that there is a need for career programs: 38% agree with the statement, "Career education and occupational training should be the major emphasis in today's community college" but they do not know how to bring the humanities to the students in those programs. Even though most of them think that teaching the humanities to students in occupational programs is different from teaching transfer students, they feel those students should be required to take several humanities courses. The suggestion is impractical because few occupational program heads are willing to impose such a requirement.

More feasible is the insertion of portions of the humanities in otherwise technical courses. The nursing-program faculty that would not require their students to take a Cultural Anthropology course might welcome a three-week unit on "The Uses of Grieving" taught by an anthropologist. The teachers of auto mechanics will not send their students to a philosophy course but they might appreciate the philosophy instructor's preparing a course module on "Business Ethics." "The Aesthetics of Design" could be presented to students in an Electronics Technology program by a teacher of Art. And a classicist could teach "Greek

and Latin Roots of Medical Terms" to the Medical Technology students.

Several obstacles to that pattern of teaching the humanities to students in occupational programs must be overcome. Most instructors are paid on the basis of classroom contact hours. Most classes are semester long. And instructional funds are typically allocated by department. In short, the work-load and budgeting formulas make it difficult for an instructor to build a section of a course to be taught to students enrolled in another course. It is essential for governing boards and administrators to revise faculty workload formulas and intramural fiscal allocations to accommodate instructors who want to teach short segments of the humanities in otherwise technical courses.

● The humanities can be taught through many other than course formats. Colloquiums, seminars, lectures, exhibits, concerts, recitals, and films are offered on most two-year college campuses for students and the lay public alike. Most of the faculty feel there are too few such extra-curricular and community-service presentations at their own colleges. When asked what changes in the humanities had taken place in their institution in the past seven years, only 4% indicated, "More extra-curricular courses." But when asked what changes they would like to see effected, 11% said they would like to see more of such activities. And 37% of the faculty said that if they had free choice in the matter, they would devote more time to presenting recitals or lectures outside of class.

Here again the faculty pay scales and workload formulas present an obstacle because they are based almost exclusively on the number of hours an instructor spends in the classroom, thus discouraging faculty members who would, given time, arrange extra-curricular and community service presentations. District and college policies should allow released time for instructors to organize exhibits,

colloquiums, seminars, and other extra-curricular activities in the humanities. Extra-mural funding agencies can help by sponsoring workshops to teach the faculty how to integrate course work and outside-of-class presentations.

● The outside-of-class activittes in the humanities tend to be especially restricted in states where the colleges receive funds based on the number of students enrolled in courses. And in nearly all institutions, the budget lines for community service and student activities differ from those received for class instruction, thus effectually separating two sets of activities that should reinforce each other. New funding formulas that run to total programmatic emphases, curricular and extra-curricular, should be explored. The faculty should at least be able to draw on the student activities budget to prepare and publicize their events.

● As a contribution to the study of the humanities, minority cultures should be represented, but very few minority-group members teach the humanities; 2.6% Blacks, 1.9% Chicanos, less than 1% Asian-Americans. In colleges opened in the past five years a higher percentage of the faculty is female and/or younger than in older institutions, but ethnic minorities are not represented there to any greater degree. Overall there is a ratio of two to one male instructors over females.

Affirmative action is not the faculty's chief concern; in fact they are strongly against preferential hiring for women and/or minority-group members at their own colleges (61% against, 24% for). Support for strict adherence to affirmative-action policies comes from the part-timers with no outside employment, from the women and ethnic minorities themselves, and especially from the younger instructors. The opponents are older white males, either full-time instructors or part-timers with regular employment elsewhere. Much work must be done if the employment

pattern of women and members of ethnic minorities is to be changed. Colleges may step up recruiting efforts, but the faculty serving on screening committees must want to comply with affirmative-action guidelines. Each time a position is posted, the administrators should apprise the faculty of the importance to the study of the humanities of selecting minority-group applicants and offer such incentives as modest budget increments to departments that recommend candidates from minority groups. The humanities instructors alone cannot overturn college-wide patterns of discrimination, but they could modify the imbalance in their own department.

● As a group the faculty have broken almost completely with the lower schools. Although half the faculty in two-year colleges have had secondary school experience, people in this group tend to be older and are not being replaced as rapidly as they once were. More to the point, few of the humanities instructors want anything to do with the secondary schools; few feel that high school teachers are useful as sources of advice on teaching. This attitude makes curriculum articulation, student recruitment, and shared instructional techniques difficult to effect between two-year colleges and secondary schools. But such activities are necessary if the two-year colleges are to act as proper entry points to post-secondary education for a majority of the high school graduates who plan to go on to college. Administrators and faculty leaders should arrange continuing series of meetings between humanities instructors at their own institution and the neighboring secondary schools, forming members of both groups into committees for articulating curriculum and instruction.

● Scholarly research is not high on the list of priorities for two-year college instructors: Although 61% of the humanities faculty say they would like to spend more time on research or professional writing, only 9% indicate they would "Do research" if they had a free summer. The two-year institutions

are uncommitted to scholarly research and the efforts of instructors to gain support for such activities are not likely to bear fruit. Nonetheless, most of the faculty would like to have more time to plan their courses, and nearly half of them have prepared multi-media instructional programs for use in their classes. The time that is typically spent by university professors on scholarly research is properly filled in the two-year colleges by instructors developing new courses and media. Colleges should make additional resources available through faculty fellowships, instructional development grants, summer pay, and released time to encourage faculty to develop their own courses and reproducible media.

- The faculty need time to learn about the latest developments in their field. Most of the respondents agree that knowledge in their field is expanding so fast that they need further training in order to keep up. And most want further professional development, either by enrolling in courses in a university, obtaining a higher degree, or otherwise enhancing their knowledge. Still, half feel that satisfactory opportunities for in-service training are not available at their own college.

Opportunities for further study can be presented in several ways. Fellowship programs directed toward two-year college instructors can be expanded, allowing the faculty to study at universities. Governing boards can encourage university study by offering sabbatical leaves. Yet the faculty also need to be able to study on their own campuses. State education agencies and other extra-mural support groups should make funds for special forms of in-service training available to the colleges directly. The faculty will make good use of properly designed programs.

- The part-time instructors need their own in-service programs. They tend

to be less experienced than the full-timers, to read fewer scholarly or professional journals. They are less likely to be members of professional associations, and less concerned with research, with curriculum and instruction, and with the humanities. Their work is often coordinated by an evening-division dean, and the full-time faculty associate little with them. Yet, they are more likely than the full-timers to prefer further professional development. Colleges should develop in-service programs especially for the part-time instructors on their staff. And, in order to stimulate curriculum and instructional integration, the full-time humanities faculty should play a leading role in implementing and conducting these programs.

● Traditionally two-year college faculty members have acquired a doctorate after some years on the job; that is, they do not enter the institutions holding that degree but earn it at a later time. A much higher percentage of instructors had the doctorate in 1975 than even five years earlier (14% as compared to 9%). The apparent reason is that the growth in faculty has slowed considerably. Heretofore, faculty members who attained doctorates while they were employed were balanced by the influx of new people without higher degrees; thus a constant ratio was maintained. Now that the number of new full-timers employed annually has dropped off considerably, the percentage of doctorate holders has become higher. Further, 24% of the survey respondents said they were currently working on a doctorate. If only one-fourth of these instructors get the degree by 1980, the ratio of doctorates will increase to 20% of the full-time faculty. Add to that the likelihood that a greater number of new full-time staff members will have doctorates and a 22% total figure by 1980 is not unrealistic. In short, an even more rapid upturn in the percentage of full-time academic faculty

members with doctoral degrees seems likely.

Because two-year colleges in many states operate on pay schedules that afford increments for degrees earned, people with doctoral degrees are frequently more highly paid--as much as $4000 more per academic year in some California institutions. Yet, these faculty members seem to address their work no differently from the way their colleagues do without the degree. Doctoral degree holders are somewhat more likely to look to the university for ideas and are slightly less concerned with their students. However, they do not differ on an index of satisfaction with their work, and their concerns with curriculum and instruction and with the humanities are the same. In brief, they have already accepted the institutional mores by the time they earn the degree, and they tend not to change their attitudes or mode of functioning when they receive it.

Because these instructors are similar to non-degree holders in their orientation to teaching and to the college, the practice of awarding sizable pay increases for instructors with doctorates seem unwarranted. In order to avoid inordinate strain on college finances in coming years, districts should consider modifying their salary schedules to reduce or eliminate the additional stipend paid to faculty upon their receiving the doctoral degree. The funds saved should be used to support instructors who want to develop new curricular and instructional forms.

● Disciplinary affiliation is weak among two-year college faculty. Many instructors teach in two or more fields, which is understandable because few colleges have enrollments large enough to support separate full-time instructors in cultural anthropology, art history, music appreciation, or cultural geography; hence the teacher's schedule is filled out with other courses. The lack of orientation toward research, reinforced by the low rewards for doing it and

by the high teaching loads, futher weakens disciplinary ties. The faculty's parochialism and failure to read or write in the professional literature make it difficult for them to maintain currency in their field. As these tendencies become more marked, communication among humanities instructors on different campuses becomes less likely.

Many humanities instructors are not involved with national professional or disciplinary organizations--23% are members of no professional groups; 55% have not attended a regional or national meeting in the past three years; and 90% have not presented a paper. Many question the value of professional associations at all. Clearly, professional organizations have much to do in serving the two-year college instructors. Some disciplinary associations have tried but many others have given the two-year colleges short shrift. As a minimum, they can all build programs that will appeal to that group. Further, they should launch membership drives and organize two-year college related sub-groups. And because many instructors read no discipline-related journals, the colleges should provide subscriptions to journals to be placed in faculty lounges and offices.

A final set of recommendations is addressed to the graduate degree-granting institutions whose practices must be modified if they are to assist the faculty teaching the humanities--hence the humanities themselves--in two-year colleges. The graduate programs can help themselves too by recruiting mature, interested graduate students from the large pool of experienced faculty members.

● The two-year college instructors would prefer to spend more time than they are now spending on their own graduate education, but it is difficult for them to meet the residency requirements imposed by most graduate programs. In order to accommodate working instructors the graduate programs must offer courses in

late afternoons and on week-ends during the academic year, courses during the summer, and courses on the campuses themselves. Some programs have moved vigorously in the direction of recruiting two-year college instructors to their programs and making appropriate adjustments. The Princeton University Department of History offers a Community College Internship Program in association with Mercer County Community College. Carnegie-Mellon University has an especially designed program for two-year college history and social science instructors. The University of Michigan has a Doctor of Arts in the Teaching of English that is directed primarily toward practicing faculty members. Several other programs might be cited, but the point is that models for restructured academic discipline-based graduate programs are available. Many more of these types of programs should be designed to accommodate faculty members who commute from two-year colleges or who can take but one or two semesters of residency.

- Faculty members prefer advice on teaching that comes from their own colleagues and from their counterparts in other two-year colleges. When asked how they would rate various groups as sources of advice on teaching, 91% of the respondents noted that their colleagues were useful. This was the highest percent of all choices offered, ranking well ahead of "university professors." Graduate programs can capitalize on the desire of two-year college instructors to be taught by their peers by involving community college instructors as clinical professors.

- Nearly half the faculty members in two-year colleges teach in two or more subject areas. This leads them to see the value of interdisciplinary courses for which they need cross-disciplinary preparation programs. If interdisciplinary graduate programs cannot be readily developed, single department programs can at least be modified so that graduate students are required to take substantial portions of

their work in cognate areas.

The preparation of new instructors also needs some modest reshaping. Few graduate programs now require practice-teaching, yet many employing administrators feel it is essential for the otherwise inexperienced applicant. The faculty too recognize the value of pedagogical training: When asked what type of training they would seek before teaching if they were to begin all over again, many indicated they would have preferred more student teaching and teaching methods courses. Academic departments should offer a student-teaching or teaching internship component along with their traditional Master of Arts degree programs.

Even if all these recommendations were followed to the letter, the two-year colleges would not become centers of study in the humanities. Their mission is broader than that of the liberal arts, and nothing here suggests it should not be. But the humanities have been so maligned in recent years that the faculty need to have their faith restored, to feel that someone cares about what they are teaching. Most of the recommendations were addressed to other groups. However, the faculty can help themselves if they begin articulating these types of recommendations in their own meetings. They stand to gain much more than they can hope to achieve by merely continuing their futile pleas for restoration of humanities course requirements.

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